

1           1.       (Amended) A method of performing a database search on a distributed  
2 computer system, comprising:  
3  
4               requesting from a first computer to a second computer remote from the first  
5 computer in the distributed computer system to search information of at least one  
6 entity;  
7  
8               indicating from the first computer to a search agent associated with the second  
9 computer [to] at least one search criterion for the information of the at least one  
10 entity;  
11  
12              accessing by the search agent at least one database remote from the first  
13 computer and the second computer in the distributed computer system, wherein the at  
14 least one database comprises information of a plurality of entities including the at  
15 least one entity, and wherein the at least one entity comprises less than all of the  
16 plurality of entities; and  
17  
18              performing by the search agent a search based on the at least one search  
19 criterion on only the information of the at least one entity in the at least one database.

REMARKS

Claims 1-48 were originally presented in the subject application. Claim 1 has hereinabove been amended to rectify a typographical error. No claims have herein been canceled or added. Therefore, claims 1-48 remain in this case.

The addition of new matter has been scrupulously avoided. In that regard, the amendment to claim 1 simply removes the word "to," which was unintentionally included in the claim as filed. Support for this amendment can be found in the summary of the invention.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the sole ground of rejection.

### 35 U.S.C. §102 Rejection

The Office Action rejected claims 1-48 under 35 U.S.C. §102(a), as allegedly anticipated by Hogan et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,778,368). Applicants respectfully, but most strenuously, traverse this rejection.

As an initial matter, Applicants point out that the standard for anticipation requires that the cited reference disclose what is recited in a claim exactly as written. Applicants will show in the following remarks that not only does Hogan et al. not anticipate the claimed invention, but it also does not make the invention obvious.

Hogan et al. discloses a repository system for embedded software (i.e., software found in such things as computer electronics and automobiles) that allows for search and reuse thereof by engineers.

In contrast, claim 1 recites a method of performing a database search on a distributed computer system. The method comprises requesting from a first computer to a second computer remote from the first computer in the distributed computer system to search information of at least one entity, indicating from the first computer to a search agent associated with the second computer at least one search criterion for the information of the at least one entity, and accessing by the search agent at least one database remote from the first

computer and the second computer in the distributed computer system. The at least one database comprises information of a plurality of entities including the at least one entity, and the at least one entity comprises less than all of the plurality of entities. The method further comprises performing by the search agent a search based on the at least one search criterion on only the information of the at least one entity in the at least one database.

Against the requesting step of claim 1, the Office Action cited to column 9, lines 14-36 of Hogan et al., which discloses a repository client accessing a repository server which, in turn, searches for repository units (small pieces of information regarding embedded software) in a repository database that matches attribute criterion supplied.

As an initial matter, Applicants point out that claim 1 does not recite to search *for* information of the at least one entity, rather, it recites to search information of the at least one entity. There is a distinction between searching for information of an entity, and searching the information of the entity. Moreover, when claim 1 is reviewed in its entirety, it becomes clear that *only* the information of the at least one entity (which comprises less than all the plurality of entities) is searched based on the at least one search criterion. Hogan et al. discloses only that a repository database is searched for repository units matching the attribute criterion given, generally. There is no disclosure in Hogan et al. regarding, for example, partitioning the database according to repository units, which would be one way to confine a search by repository unit.

Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 1 cannot be anticipated by or made obvious over Hogan et al.

Claim 4 recites that a search agent is transferred from the second computer to the first computer and runs at the first computer, and that a communication agent resides at the first

computer. The communication agent performs the requesting and the indicating, while the search agent provides the results of the search to the communication agent.

Against claim 4, the Office Action cited to column 4, lines 10-65 of Hogan et al. However, that section is merely a portion of the objects of the invention in the summary, and Applicants could find nothing regarding what is recited in claim 4. Moreover, Hogan et al. discloses at column 9, lines 17-18 in the detailed description, that the repository server does the searching, and provides no disclosure regarding, for example, a search agent transferred from the repository server to a repository client. As listed in column 11, at line 24, the repository server houses the search engine.

Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 4 cannot be anticipated by or made obvious over Hogan et al.

Claim 5 recites that the at least one database of claim 1 is stored at at least one third computer remote from the first computer and the second computer in the distributed computer system, the search agent residing at the at least one third computer.

Against claim 5, the Office Action cites to Hogan et al. at column 11, lines 1-13. However, that section of Hogan et al. merely discloses that repository clients (i.e., the computers utilized by engineers searching for embedded software) can be located anywhere on a network (LAN, WAN, etc.). There is no disclosure in this section regarding location of a database, other than it being housed in the repository server (see column 11, lines 27-28).

Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 5 cannot be anticipated by or rendered obvious over Hogan et al.

Claim 7 recites that the search agent of claim 1 is transferred from the second computer to the first computer and runs at the first computer. Yet again, the Office Action cites to column 11, lines 1-13 of Hogan et al. However, again Applicants submit that the location of repository clients has no relevance to the location of the search agent generally, let alone the transfer thereof from the second computer to the first, with the agent running at the first computer. Moreover, Hogan et al. specifically discloses that a search engine resides on the repository server (see column 11, line 24).

Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 7 cannot be anticipated by or rendered obvious over Hogan et al.

Claim 8 recites that the first computer is associated with a buyer, the second computer is associated with a seller, the at least one entity comprises the seller, and the information comprises product and/or service information of the seller.

Against claim 8, the Office Action cites to column 5, line 58 through column 6, line 26 of Hogan et al. However, Applicants submit that the mere use of the words "marketing" and "business development" at the very end of cited section simply falls far short of the scenario recited in claim 8.

Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 8 cannot be anticipated by or rendered obvious over Hogan et al.

Claim 12 recites that the second computer provides access to a Web site of the at least one entity having a particular format, the method further comprising providing results of the search to the second computer in a format compatible with the particular format, enabling the second computer to provide a consistent experience on the Web site to a user of the first computer.

Against claim 12, the Office Action generally cites to the sections of Hogan et al. cited against claims 1, 4 and 8. However, Applicants could find no disclosure therein regarding the format of the search results, or compatibility for a consistent Web site experience. Moreover, Applicants submit that this rejection lacks sufficient specificity to constitute a *prima facie* anticipation rejection.

Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 12 cannot be anticipated by or made obvious over Hogan et al.

Claims 13-15 generally recite specifics about who creates or maintains the claimed at least one database. Against these claims, the Office Action again cites to column 11, lines 1-13. However, as remarked above, this section merely discloses that the repository clients (i.e., the user computers) can be located anywhere on the network. Applicants submit that this has nothing whatever to do with who creates or maintains the database.

Therefore, Applicants submit that none of claims 13-15 can be anticipated by or made obvious over Hogan et al.

Finally, claim 16 recites that the at least one search criterion comprises a null criterion such that the search returns all information of the at least one entity in the at least one database.

Against claim 16, the Office Action cited to column 4, lines 20-34 of Hogan et al. However, the cited section of the summary, containing objects of the invention, merely discloses embedded software characterization via software attributes, a repository client comprising a Web browser and help application, and a repository client with simulated operating and developing environments. Applicants submit there is not a hint of relevance to the recited subject matter in claim 16 to be found in the cited section of Hogan et al.

Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 16 cannot be anticipated by or made obvious over Hogan et al.

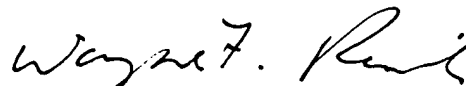
Claims 17-33 and 47, and claims 34-46 and 48 are system and program product claims, respectively, corresponding to claims 1-16. Thus, the remarks made above with respect to claims 1-16 are equally applicable to these claims. Therefore, Applicants submit that these claims also cannot be anticipated by or made obvious over Hogan et al.

### CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that the dependent claims not specifically addressed herein are allowable for the same reasons as the independent claims from which they directly or ultimately depend, as well as for their additional limitations.

For all the above reasons, Applicants maintain that the claims of the subject application define patentable subject matter and earnestly requests allowance of claims 1-48.

If a telephone conference would be of assistance in advancing prosecution of the subject application, Applicants' undersigned attorney invites the Examiner to telephone him at the number provided.



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